

Lesson Plan – Discoverers (Grades 1 –2)

Activities are teacher led and can be adjusted according to grade level and understanding. This lesson uses national parks to introduce students to different geographical areas and their representative plants and animals.



1. Set the stage

Read the *National Parks Background Information* and discuss what a national park is. Tell your students that today we are going to learn about some different national parks and then we will find out about our own national park here in Los Angeles.

2. Gather information

Divide students into two groups. Each group will work on one national park. Pass out the national park brochures (request brochures that describe parks of great contrast: seashore and mountain, or island and desert). Help students to open the brochures. Quietly tell students the name of their park (they can keep the name secret from the other group until they give their report). Use the *Worksheet* questions to guide the students in what to look for. Have paper and crayons or colored pencils available and assign students in each group to draw picture answers to the worksheet questions.

3. Report

Groups come back together and give group oral reports on their national parks. The group spokesperson can announce the name of their national park. Students show their pictures to report what their national park looks like, what plants or animals live there, things people can do when they stay there, etc.



4. Wrap up using Questions 7 to 11 on worksheet

Ask who would like to work at a national park? What would they do? Who would like to visit a national park? Pass out copies of Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area brochure and invite students to visit this national park here in Los Angeles with their families.

5. Evaluate

Consider detail and length of oral or picture responses.





National Parks Background Information

National parks are special places that belong to you — and to me, to all of us. These areas are protected because they are important. Some parks protect beautiful places like the deep lake at Crater Lake National Park. Some parks protect special plants, like the tall trees at Redwood National Park. Some parks have steaming hot springs like Yellowstone, our first national park. Other national parks protect historic places like the White House in Washington, DC where the President lives.

National parks protect parts of our country or our country's history that we want everyone to know about. Each national park has something special for you to discover and enjoy. National parks are a gift — a *legacy*, that we all share.



Worksheet

1. What is the name of your national park?

2. Where is that park in the United States?

(Teacher: you may want to show the location on the National Park System Map and Guide, if appropriate.)

3. What does the area look like at this park? Is it a desert, mountain, lake, seashore? *(Assign a student to draw a picture of it.)*

4. Do you see any animals in the pictures of your park? If so, draw a picture of one.



*Teacher:
Use Questions
1 to 6 to focus
information
gathering.*



5. Do you see plants in the pictures of your national park?
If so, draw a picture of one.

*Teacher:
Use Questions
7 to 11 for the
wrap up activities
after the reports.*

6. What kinds of things (activities) can people do when they visit your national park? Draw a picture of one thing you can do there.

7. Who do national parks belong to? _____
(Answer: They belong to all of us)

8. Park rangers work at national parks. They tell people about the parks and protect the plants and animals there. Would you like to work at a national park? _____

9. Have you been to a national park? _____ Which one(s)?

10. If not, would you like to visit one? _____

11. Have you heard of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, the national park here in Los Angeles? _____

